

Message Text

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SUBJECT: AMBASSADOR JOHNSONS STATEMENT OF FEBRUARY 18, 1975
(SALT TWO-519)

THE FOLLOWING IS STATEMENT DELIVERED BY AMBASSADOR JOHNSON
AT THE SALT TWO MEETING OF FEBRUARY 18, 1975.

QUOTE: STATEMENT BY AMBASSADOR JOHNSON
FEBRUARY 18, 1975

MR MINISTER:

I

THE UNDERSTANDING REACHED LAST FALL AT VLADIVOSTOK PROVIDED
FOR MORE THAN THE VARIOUS QUANTITATIVE AND QUALITATIVE LIMIT-
ATIONS WHICH WE HAVE BEEN DISCUSSING. IT ALSO PROVIDED THAT THE
NEW AGREEMENT WHICH WE ARE HERE TO PREPARE WILL INCLUDE A PRO-
VISION TO THE EFFECT THAT NEGOTIATIONS SHOULD START NO LATER
THAN 1980-81 ON FURTHER LIMITATIONS AND POSSIBLE REDUCTIONS OF
STRATEGIC ARMS. TODAY I WILL ADDRESS MYSELF TOT THAT PROVISION OF
THE VLADIVOSTOK UNDERSTANDING AND THE IMPORTANCE WHICH THE UNITED

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STATES GIVES TO IT.

THE SUBJECTS OF FURTHER LIMITATIONS AND REDUCTIONS OF STRATEGIC OFFENSIVE ARMS ARE NOT NEW ONES IN OUR NEGOTIATIONS. I HAVE ADDRESSED THEM ON A NUMBER OF OCCASIONS, MOST RECENTLY AT OUR LAST SESSION HERE IN 1974. HOWEVER, GIVEN OUR JOINT OBJECTIVE OF HAVING A COMPLETED AGREEMENT FOR SIGNATURE DURING THE COURSE OF THIS YEAR, THE REQUIREMENT FOR AGREEMENT ON PROVISIONS DEALING WITH THESE SUBJECTS HAS BEEN GIVEN AN URGENCY WHICH, PERHAPS, IT DID NOT HAVE BEFORE, AND IT IS FOR THAT REASON THAT I WANT TO SPEAK TO THEM TODAY.

II

OVER THE PAST TWENTY FIVE YEARS, BOTH OF OUR COUNTRIES HAVE ACQUIRED LARGE NUMBERS OF STRATEGIC NUCLEAR WEAPONS. EACH OF OUR NATIONS HAS SOUGHT TO ASSURE THE SECURITY OF ITS PEOPLE AND INSTITUTIONS. EACH HAS BUILT ITS STRATEGIC FORCES TO HIGH LEVELS AND GREAT DESTRUCTIVE POTENTIAL. IN AN EFFORT TO DEAL WITH THIS SITUATION, AS AN INITIAL STEP, IN 1972 BOTH SIDES ENTERED INTO THE INTERIM AGREEMENT TO LIMIT CERTAIN STRATEGIC OFFENSIVE ARMS. IN ADDITION, IN 1972 THEY ENTERED INTO THE ABM TREATY; AND SUBSEQUENTLY, IN 1974, THE PERMITTED ABM LEVELS WERE FURTHER REDUCED. THEY TOOK ANOTHER MAJOR STEP AT VLADIVOSTOK LAST NOVEMBER PROVIDING A BASIS FOR A NEW AGREEMENT PLACING EQUAL LIMITS FOR BOTH SIDES ON THE AGGREGATE NUMBER OF STRATEGIC DELIVERY VEHICLES AND ON LAUNCHERS FOR ICBMS AND SLBMS EQUIPPED WITH MIRVS.

THE ESTABLISHMENT OF SUCH AGREED LIMITATIONS WILL BE A SIGNIFICANT STEP. HOWEVER, IT WILL NOT COMPLETE OUR OBLIGATIONS. IN ADDITION TO OTHER MUTUALLY AGREED DECLARATIONS, IN THE ABM TREATY BOTH OF OUR GOVERNMENTS FORMALLY DECLARED THEIR INTENTION TO ACHIEVE REDUCTIONS OF STRATEGIC OFFENSIVE ARMS AT THE EARLIEST PRACTICAL DATE. AND NOW THE AGREEMENT RESULTING FROM THE VLADIVOSTOK MEETING HAS PLACED A SPECIFIC REQUIREMENT UPON US TO DEAL IN THE NEW AGREEMENT WITH THE MATTERS OF FURTHER LIMITATIONS AND REDUCTIONS.

III

AS WE HAVE PREVIOUSLY NOTED, ONE OF THE FEATURES OF OUR PAST RELATIONSHIP WHICH HAS LED TO THE PRESENT LEVELS OF STRATEGIC ARMAMENTS ON BOTH SIDES HAS BEEN UNCERTAINTY AS TO THE FUTURE CAPABILITIES OF THE OTHER SIDE. WE BELIEVE THAT AN

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AGREEMENT BASED ON THE UNDERSTANDING REACHED AT VLADIVOSTOK, PROVIDING FOR EQUAL AGGREGATES OF 2400 STRATEGIC DELIVERY SYSTEMS AND 1320 LAUNCHERS FOR ICBMS AND SLBMS EQUIPPED WITH MIRVS, WILL SUBSTANTIALLY REDUCE THESE UNCERTAINTIES AND THEREBY CREATE AN ATMOSPHERE MORE FAVORABLE TO INITIATING A PROGRAM OF AGREED MUTUAL REDUCTIONS IN STRATEGIC ARMS. SUCH A PROGRAM OF REDUCTIONS COULD, IN TURN, FURTHER REDUCE THESE UNCERTAINTIES AND MAKE AN ADDITIONAL CONTRIBUTION TO THE ENHANCEMENT OF

STRATEGIC STABILITY AND MUTUAL DETERRENCE. FINALLY, SUBSTANTIAL SAVINGS IN RESOURCES FOR BOTH OUR COUNTRIES COULD BE REALIZED THROUGH REDUCTIONS.

THE UNITED STATES BELIEVES THAT THE BENEFITS FROM REDUCTIONS SHOULD BE REALIZED AS SOON AS POSSIBLE. MOREOVER, A COMMITMENT BY THE TWO SIDES TO BEGIN EARLY NEGOTIATIONS ON REDUCTIONS OF THEIR STRATEGIC ARSENALS WOULD HAVE A FAVORABLE POLITICAL IMPACT. IT WOULD PROVIDE CLEAR EVIDENCE TO THE WORLD OF THE WILLINGNESS OF OUR TWO COUNTRIES TO MOVE AHEAD PROMPTLY TO LIMIT FURTHER THE INHERENT DANGERS ASSOCIATED WITH THE HIGH LEVELS OF DESTRUCTIVE CAPABILITY PRESENTLY IN BEING. ON THE OTHER HAND, DELAY IN APPROACHING THE TASK OF REDUCTIONS CAN ONLY HAVE A NEGATIVE POLITICAL IMPACT. ADDITIONALLY, FAILURE TO DEAL PROMPTLY WITH THE ISSUES INVOLVED IN REDUCTIONS WILL MAKE OUR EVENTUAL TASK MORE DIFFICULT.

FOR THE SAME REASONS, WE ALSO BELIEVE THAT, TOGETHER WITH NEGOTIATIONS ON REDUCTIONS, THERE SHOULD ALSO BE NEGOTIATIONS ON FURTHER LIMITATIONS ON STRATEGIC ARMS.

IV

IN SUMMARY, THE UNITED STATES BELIEVES THAT EQUALITY CAN MAINTAINED AND STABILITY ENHANCED AT LEVELS OF STRATEGIC ARMAMENTS LOWER THAN THOSE WHICH COULD EXIST UNDER THE LIMITS SET FORTH IN THE VLADIVOSTOK UNDERSTANDING. THE UNITED STATES, THEREFORE, SUPPORTS THE CONCEPT OF MUTUAL REDUCTIONS. WE ALSO BELIEVE THAT THE EARLIER SUCH REDUCTIONS COMMENCE, THE SOONER THEIR BENEFITS CAN BE REALIZED. ACCORDINGLY, MR MINISTER, I HAVE BEEN INSTRUCTED BY MY GOVERNMENT TO STATE THAT THE UNITED STATES BELIEVES THAT NEGOTIATIONS ON FURTHER LIMITATION AND REDUCTION OF STRATEGIC ARMS SHOULD START AS SOON AS POSSIBLE AFTER THE NEW AGREEMENT IS CONCLUDED, AND THAT A PROVISION TO THIS EFFECT SHOULD BE INCLUDED IN THE NEW AGREEMENT. UNQUOTE

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